# HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION: THE ISSUES

*A Consultation Paper*
*Prepared by Manitoba's*
*High School Review Panel*

*March, 1987*

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Manitoba
Education


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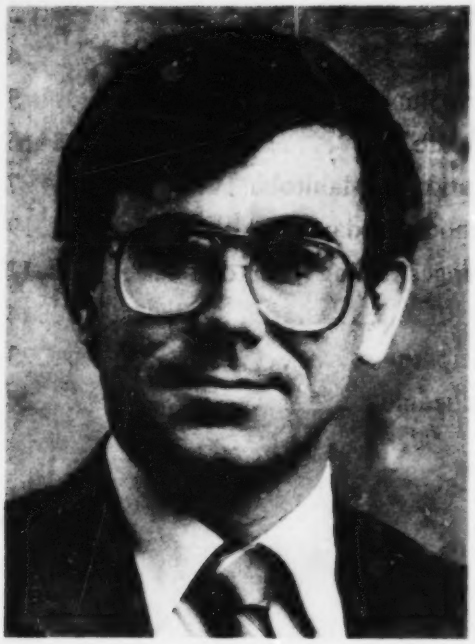
Additional copies and information are available from:


High School Review Office
217-1200 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3G 0T5
Telephone 945-4607 or
1-800-282-8069 ext. 4607
(toll free in Manitoba)


*Front Cover Photo by Larry Glawson*

# Minister's Message



On August 5, 1986, I announced the details of a major review of high school education in the province. A 21-member panel, representing all sectors of the community and all regions of the province, was appointed to identify issues for public discussion. Subsequently, a youth sub-committee was formed to ensure that the views of those most affected by the high school system were heard. The results of their deliberations are contained in the following consultation paper.

I want to stress, at the outset, that this is just the beginning of the review process. The consultation paper is a point of departure for public discussion of the issues throughout the province. This is an opportunity for us to set the direction for high school education into the next decade and beyond. In order to truly reflect the concerns and expectations of all Manitobans, all interested groups and individuals are being encouraged to make representations to the panel.

I think we all recognize that the time has come to examine the system to ensure that all students have the opportunity to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to meet the challenges of tomorrow. Technology, the economy and society have been changing at an increasingly rapid rate over the past few years, placing new demands on our schools that force us to re-examine our assumptions and readjust our perception of options.

In light of high levels of youth unemployment and changes in the labour market brought about by the transition to an information society, an obvious question is whether schooling should be more closely tied to the labour market or whether schools ought to be equipping students with skills to cope with a changing society, or both. It may well be that education will have to be rethought in terms of the knowledge that we wish to transmit, in terms of how, when and where learning is to occur, and in terms of what we consider an adequate preparation for life. Given that the majority of high school graduates do not go on to post-secondary education directly, we may wish to rethink the purposes of high school as part of a continuum of learning throughout life.

We also have to ask ourselves how well we are preparing our young people to make the critical choices that face them in their final years of public schooling. During this period they must choose to continue on to some form of post-secondary education, enter the workforce directly, or opt for a mixture of both. Whatever the choice, parents and educators want to be assured that students will have the most appropriate preparation to meet these challenges.

Other issues that must be considered include curriculum content, the balance between basic and optional programs, the impact of technology on schools, and the role of parents and students in the public education system.

Of course, underlying all these questions is one fundamental consideration: What is possible given our present economic circumstances? Provincial support to public schools has risen by 50 percent over the past six years. Unfortunately costs and demands placed on the system are growing at a faster rate than available resources. Some balance must be found between public expectations and what we can reasonably afford.

I would like to point out that Manitoba has an excellent record for finding the means to support educational programs and services which are shown to be beneficial. I cite, for example, the radical change which has taken place in special education in response to a similar review. There is also the possibility of further increasing efficiency in the delivery of high school programs, thereby releasing funds for new initiatives. In addition, the review may result in the reallocation of resources from programs deemed to be obsolete or ineffective to other more relevant services.

We must also bear in mind the broad philosophical basis of our present public school system. There are four basic principles that must be reflected in how we view the possible and future purposes, content and organization of high school education in the province:

* That excellence is an essential component of schooling in Manitoba;

* That all young people in Manitoba have equality of access to a basic high school program;

* That provision is made for individual needs are provided for to the extent possible in programs and instruction, whether English or French, so that all students have the opportunity for success; and

* That communities and parents are, and need to be, involved in developing and maintaining the highest possible standard of education in this province.

This discussion paper represents a great deal of work on the part of the panel. The representatives have deliberated at considerable length on the issues that are set out. Now, both the panel and I are interested in hearing your views on the issues that have been raised. If there are issues that you do not see raised in this paper, I would appreciate your bringing these forward so that they may be considered in the review process. You will find information on how you can become involved in the consultation process on the last pages of this report.

Considering the long range implications of this review, it is vitally important that we examine all possible options. I trust that the consultation phase will provide you with ample opportunity to have your comments and concerns heard.

Jerry Storie

***The Honourable Jerry Storie,***
***Minister of Education.***

# Introduction

The Manitoba High School Review was initiated in February, 1986 in response to a need identified by educators in Manitoba to ensure high school students in the province continue to have the opportunity to develop the personal resources needed to meet the challenges of a changing society.

The first step in the review process was the appointment of a 21-member panel to examine high school programs, to study problems, issues and opportunities in high school education and to recommend appropriate changes. In addition to the groups represented on the panel, a special youth sub-committee was formed to encourage input from Manitoba students.

This Consultation Paper was prepared by the High School Review panel to:

* inform the public at large of the general present-day characteristics of high school education;
* consider the needs of students preparing to take their place in society;
* identify for discussion potential options to address apparent needs and issues.

# The High School Review Panel

## *Back Row*

LEFT TO RIGHT: **Grace Parasuik,** Director of the Curriculum Development and Implementation Branch of Manitoba Education. **Dr. Peter Neufeld,** school trustee in Rolling River School Division and executive member of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees. **Terry Clifford,** mathematics consultant in Winnipeg School Division No. 1 and former executive member of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. **Henry Isaak,** teacher at the Garden Valley Collegiate in Winkler and Treasurer of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. **Roy White,** Director, Education and Communication Services, Manitoba Association of School Trustees. **Dr. John Stapleton,** Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. **George Van Den Bosch,** partner in the legal firm of Pitblado & Hoskin, Barr & Sol and an executive member of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce. **Ed Buller,** Assistant Deputy Minister of Program Development and Support Services, Manitoba Education.

## *Middle Row*

LEFT TO RIGHT: **Tony Lussier,** Dean of Post-Secondary and Applied Studies at Keewatin Community College in The Pas. **Dr. Linda Asper,** principal of College Beliveau, St. Boniface School Division, past president of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. **William Dumas,** teacher, Alternatives Program, Hugh John McDonald Junior High School. **Joyce Wawrykow,** Vice-President of the Home and School Parent-Teacher Federation of Manitoba. **Strini Reddy,** Chief Superintendent with Frontier School Division No. 48. **Colin Jamieson,** superintendent of schools in Western School Division No. 4 and an executive member of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents. **Lorraine Sebastian,** accounting clerk for the Manitoba Vegetable Producers' Marketing Board, appointed by the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

## *Front Row*

LEFT TO RIGHT: **Vaughn Wadelius,** principal of Margaret Barbour Collegiate Institute in The Pas and past president of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. **Stephanie Shumilak,** school trustee and Vice-Chairman of the Board with the Lord Selkirk School Division. **Guy Roy,** Assistant Deputy Minister in the Bureau de l'education francaise, Manitoba Education. **Hilda Dysart,** school counsellor at Oscar Blackburn School in South Indian Lake. **Jerry Storie,** Minister of Education. **Dr. Bob Cross,** Assistant Superintendent: Curriculum at River East School Division and an executive member of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents. **Maria Chaput-Arbez,** Executive Director of the Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain.

## *Seated*

**Guylaine Nacinovich,** graduate of College Louis-Riel, university student and chair of the Review panel's Youth Sub-Committee.

# Manitoba High School Review Panel Mandate

The Manitoba High School Review panel was established to:

* review and evaluate Manitoba's senior high school program and to examine the role of the high school in assisting each student in becoming a competent, confident, responsible and participating member of society;

* identify appropriate goals and priorities for high school education in Manitoba;

* recommend ways in which instructional programs, in content, structure and delivery, can more effectively take into account, reflect and respond to the needs and nature of adolescents, a changing society and a changing knowledge base.

* recommend feasible courses of action for improvement.

In working towards these goals, the High School Review panel met on a regular basis and established appropriate sub-committees, working parties and task groups to review current literature and research as well as theoretical and practical sources on high school issues.

With input from the public through a consultative program of open meetings to be held throughout the province, the panel is expected to prepare the final report of the Manitoba High School Review, including recommendations and plans of action, by January, 1988.

# High School Education in Manitoba

## *Background*

Until the early 1960s, Manitoba's high school program emphasized academic preparation for students entering university. The emergence of the post World War II baby boom and the resulting rise in high school enrollment coupled with developments leading to a diversification of student requirements, led to a reorganization of Manitoba's high school program. The new program consisted of a package of five subject groups: university entrance and general, business, industrial and occupational education.

In 1968, the university entrance program and general courses were combined and business education and industrial programs redesigned to make them more accessible to all high school students. While these measures resulted in a more flexible approach to high school education, they represented only a small portion of the changes necessary to meet the needs of Manitoba's secondary students. A series of public meetings held to determine Manitoba's educational needs at the time resulted in the Core Committee Report of 1973. Many of the points brought out in the report were reflected in the recommendations adopted after the 1974 revision of Manitoba's high school programs.

As a result of the 1974 report, Manitoba high schools changed from a grade promotion system to a subject credit system. The assumption was that the student, his or her parents and the school were best able to meet the student's various needs. School-initiated courses and student-initiated projects were introduced to allow schools the opportunity to tailor a student's program to his or her individual needs. Provisions were also made for variety in course content and delivery.

New challenges have necessitated further change - of particular note is the introduction of legislation re-establishing the educational rights of the Francophone community by recognizing both English and French as instructional languages. Our multicultural heritage has also been reflected in the recent introduction of various language options. In addition, new legislation ensures every child, regardless of physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, has the right to develop to his or her fullest extent as a valued member of society.

Over the years, Manitoba's high school program has evolved from a few "core" courses and restricted electives to a program of studies offering, in some cases, over 200 courses with a variety of program choices and delivery variations. Today, educational progress is based on a system balancing compulsory and optional credits obtainable under several patterns eventually leading to various career or post secondary paths. The requirements for graduation are as follows:

a. each credit equals the equivalent of an average of 115 hours of organized learning.

b. the minimum requirement for high school standing is 20 credits to include:

- ten compulsory credits meeting provincial curriculum guidelines.

Compulsory subjects include: two levels each of mathematics and social studies, three levels of Language Arts and one level of physical education.

– ten optional credits from courses designed by the province or chosen from the general education options.

Credits may be obtained through a variety of delivery patterns including not only academic courses but general, business, industrial and occupational education. In cases where students are specializing in a specific field, optional courses may be chosen from the major fields of interest.

Courses developed by schools to address the individual needs of students are also applicable to high school accreditation, as are up to three student-initiated teacher-monitored projects. Students may also earn high school credits for work experience, on-the-job training and vocational experience.

# Manitoba High Schools Today

In order to fully understand and appreciate the issues facing Manitoba educators, students and the public, it is necessary to examine not only what has gone before and what lies ahead for our high schools, but what characterizes the high school experience of today.

The following overview of Manitoba high schools was prepared from a report by the Planning and Research branch of Manitoba Education. Copies of the report in its entirety are available through the High School Review Office. Additional information about local programs and activities may be obtained by contacting high schools directly.

## *Overview*

The vast majority of high school students in Manitoba are enrolled in the public high school system, with 6% attending private schools, or schools in special revenue school districts. Across the province, 174 public schools provide high school education to over 46,000 students. All but 15% of high schools province-wide are now organized under grades nine through twelve as opposed to the more traditional senior high school years of grades ten to twelve.

Although three-quarters of all high schools are located in rural and northern Manitoba, their student and teacher population represents just under one-half of the provincial total. In contrast, Winnipeg's one-quarter share of high schools and one-half of all teachers provide service to over 50% of the province's entire student population.

This ratio is due, in part, to Manitoba's diverse geography and population patterns. Generally speaking, rural and northern high schools are smaller than those in Winnipeg, having an average of less than 200 students in grades nine to twelve, fewer students per classroom, and lower student-teacher ratios than their larger Winnipeg counterparts. Province-wide, the average student-teacher ratio is nineteen to one.

## *Schools*

Public high school programs are offered in a variety of settings, the majority of which exist within a facility also offering elementary or junior high instruction. Although all high schools have adequate classroom space to meet the needs of their students, the availability of facilities such as theatre forums, and classrooms for special programs such as industrial arts, home economics and vocational education vary from school to school and region to region. Winnipeg high schools generally have a greater variety of facilities although rural and northern schools are on par in the areas of gymnasia, libraries, laboratories, business education and classrooms set aside for multi-purpose use.

## Teachers

Over 90% of the teachers currently working in Manitoba high schools are classified as regular classroom teachers. Educational specialization, while on the increase, is still limited to about 10% of all Winnipeg teachers, 8% of rural teachers and only 3% of teachers in Manitoba's north.

As Canada's average age has risen, so too has the average age of Manitoba's high school teachers. The median age of all Manitoba high school teachers now stands at 39. Approximately 16% are 50 years of age or older. Generally, older, more experienced instructors teach in Winnipeg. The largest number of younger teachers can be found in the north.

## Student Support Services

Guidance and counselling is provided by trained counsellors and teachers in all Manitoba high schools. On average, Manitoba high schools have 567 students per counsellor. The ratio of students to counsellors in Winnipeg is 392 to 1, less than half of the rural ratio of 909 students per counsellor, and the northern ratio of 952 students per counsellor.

## Programs

More than half of all public high schools function within a semester system which organizes the school year into two terms of equal duration. The remainder have classes over the full ten months of the school year.

Whatever system they follow, all Manitoba high schools offer courses designated by the province as compulsory. In response to the growing need for special skill requirements brought about by today's changing society, students may also choose from a wide range of options including the following:

## French Language Instruction

In 1985/86, 23 Manitoba high schools offered courses taught in French. These were split almost equally between the Francais program for students having French as a first language and French Immersion for students wishing to learn French as a second language.

A total of 10 schools in Winnipeg and 13 schools in rural Manitoba offer French language programs. Manitoba's northern high schools currently do not offer any French programs.

## *Computer Related Courses*

The 1980s have seen increased student demand for computer related courses which have been available since the early 1970s. Seventy percent of high schools province-wide offer at least one provincially-approved computer related course which may include instruction in computer science, computer awareness or data processing. About 14% of all Manitoba high school students are enrolled in one or more of these courses. Only 13% of all high schools offered all courses, while 30% offered none. Although the availability of specific courses varies, more Winnipeg and rural high schools offer computer related courses than do northern schools. However the north has the most schools, which offer computer science courses.

## *Vocational Education Program Patterns*

At present, less than one quarter of Manitoba high schools offer vocational education program patterns. Twenty-three percent of the schools in Winnipeg provide vocational education program patterns while only 20% of northern schools and 15% of rural Manitoba schools do the same.

## *Occupational Entrance Program Patterns*

Occupational Entrance Program pattern courses are now available in over one-third of all high schools. Fifty-four percent of Winnipeg's schools offer courses in this area, as do 47% of northern schools and 28% of rural high schools.

## *Business Education Program Patterns*

Approximately 55% of all Manitoba schools offer a business education program pattern. In Winnipeg, these programs are available in 86% of all schools, in the north, 69% and in rural schools, only 42%.

## *School Initiated Courses*

In 1985/86, 145 of Manitoba's 174 public high schools – or 83% – offered school initiated courses to address a wide variety of student needs. Courses offered vary depending on the characteristics of the region and the interests of the school population.

# Educational Challenges Facing Manitoba

While expansion characterized education in the 1950s and 60s, and diversity was the watchword of the 70s, fiscal restraint has emerged as the issue dominating education in the 1980s.

As competition for public funds has increased, so have the demands on education for expanded involvement in areas including French Immersion programs, special attention for the handicapped, enrichment for the gifted, precise vocational skills and the preservation of cultural heritage. The public still feels it is education which best ensures equal opportunity for all and that education plays a major role in cultural vitality, social progress and economic growth. The expectation remains that education is responsible for preparing young people and adults for the labour force and for the complexities of modern society. Increasing public scrutiny of education's performance and a strong public drive to improve the quality of education add to the already heavy demands put on the educational system.

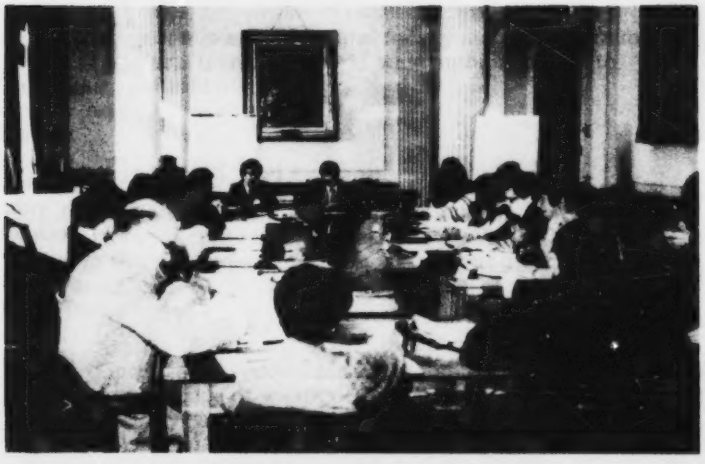
It is becoming more and more difficult for the existing educational system to respond to these broad and often conflicting expectations. In addition, a new set of challenges is being presented by the technological revolution, underway in Canada since the late 1960s. The emergence of today's technologically-oriented society represents a major shift in thought and practice. It requires an acceptance of not only new ideas and patterns of behavior, but also a new perspective on the world and the way in which we function within it.

The nature of new information technologies is changing society. Increasingly complex systems require new methods of cooperation and ways of making important decisions. Improved communication among organizational employees at all levels is essential. Today, emphasis is shifting from financial to human factors and greater value is being given to individual contributions. Reading, writing, mathematics, critical skills in thinking, learning and creating - these are the skills most valued in modern society.

The formal education system is facing growing competition. Already, students can learn much of what they need to know through self-instructional computer packages, through access to computer databases, through business and industry training programs and by networking with others.

Tremendous opportunities exist for education within the framework of today's technological society. A new model of teaching and learning is required if these opportunities are to be realized. The major emphasis of schools will likely shift to the teaching of learning and thinking skills and the imparting of ethics, values and social interaction. Ideally, teachers will manage the learning process rather than simply transmit course content and students will become self-directed learners. Relationships between teachers and learners will be increasingly important. Learning will take place always and everywhere – in schools, in industry, at home, in libraries and in businesses providing access to technology, educational programs and databases. The entire community will become more involved in learning and will assume greater responsibility for education.

How do we move from an educational system that has its roots in an industrial society to one that places us firmly in the new technological age? One thing is clear: we need to ask ourselves some basic questions. We need to rethink the entire education system in terms of not only what is taught, but where and how it is taught. We need to explore new partnerships, new funding mechanisms and new management styles. We need to address opportunities provided by satellites, computers and information networks – opportunities to extend learning to all, regardless of background, location, interest or age. We need to not only accept rapid change as a reality of today's society, but to welcome the challenges and opportunities it brings.



# The Issues

After several months of deliberation, the High School Review panel has identified a number of issues which address an array of concerns. These issues, while not exhaustive, will serve as a basis for reflection and discussion by the general public and by various organizations involved in education within Manitoba. The purpose of the consultation process is to raise other issues and recommendations which will assist professional educators in making changes consistent with public perception of what makes for an effective high school education.

The issues which follow have been grouped into four categories for easier reference. First, questions are posed regarding the purposes of high school education, followed by a review of programs and services offered in high schools. The third category deals with the high school as a learning environment and, finally, the organization of programs is examined in section four.

## *Purposes of High School Education*

Manitoba high schools have historically directed their efforts towards preparing young people to function independently as informed and concerned citizens and preparing students for post-secondary studies. More recently, schools have also been expected to prepare students for the workplace and to encourage students to develop to their fullest potential mentally, physically, morally, emotionally and socially.

In examining the future role of education, a crucial question is to what extent high schools will continue to meet these expectations. To that end, the review must determine the relative importance of each of these roles and measure society's perceptions as to which are appropriate for inclusion in the educational system.

### *1.*

The role of education in society is a major issue under debate. Expectations in the areas of training and education vary with the interests of many groups. For example, some feel students should leave the system with the necessary skills to perform a specific job. Others feel students should be taught the resourcefulness to confront major moral issues. Some groups seek to enhance the "3 Rs" with supportive skills consistent with our technological society. The issues of including human relationships and sexuality as part of a basic education program and a call for schools to provide for the needs of all students, including those with special needs, have also arisen.

It is clear educational expectations reflect the diverse and changing nature of today's society. Pressure to include social, intellectual, moral, psychological and economic concerns in the educational system have left parents and educators torn between what is expected and what is possible.

## *For Discussion:*

How can we establish a balance between public expectations of what schools should provide and what schools can reasonably be expected to provide? How should high schools respond to the varied needs of their students? Which of those needs should be considered priorities?

**2.**

While the role of the school has always gone beyond the simple transmission of knowledge, societal changes have made it necessary for schools to take increasing responsibility for the moral, aesthetic, social, emotional, psychological and physical development of students.

## *For Discussion:*

What are the purposes of high school education? What should be taught in high school? What attitudes, knowledge and skills do all students need?

**3.**

Students completing their high school education are confronted with several possibilities which include continuing their formal education, entering the workplace, preparing for career changes and adapting to changes in family status.

## *For Discussion:*

How should high school education help prepare young adults to make critical choices—choices which may have life-long consequences?

**4.**

Manitoba is a multicultural society and our communities reflect that fact. Increasing world-wide mobility points to continued cultural diversity.

## *For Discussion:*

How should high schools ensure student awareness and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities in society and develop a better understanding of the various groups that make up our society?

**5.**

Since school systems are accountable to the public, updated knowledge of what goes on in school is a critical element for community participation.

## *For Discussion:*

By what means can educational policy makers more effectively inform the public of the purposes of high school education? By what means should school divisions inform the public of the activities of high school?

**6.**

In the past, high school curriculum emphasized the preparation of students for university. More recently, the curriculum has been extended to meet the needs of a broader range of students.

## *For Discussion:*

What skills should students have developed upon completion of high school? To what extent should these skills be of a general nature or related to specific purposes?

# *Programs and Services Offered in High School*

Over the years, emphasis has been put on different content and services, each perceived as important to the development of young people at the time. At one time, for example, the emphasis was on a single program for all students. More recently, we have seen an emphasis on providing for student needs through a high school program which allows for a variety of course patterns. Students can now choose from different program patterns which lead to post-secondary study, vocational training, or employment, or they can opt for a broad, general education.

The organization of knowledge has, to a large extent, been consistent with the requirements of society. Society's new emphasis on technology is modifying how we define knowledge, how we learn and how individuals interact.

**1.**

At present, a common core of subjects have been identified as essential for the overall education of high school students. During high school, most students must complete at least two levels of Mathematics, Social Studies and Sciences, three courses in Language Arts and one in Physical Education in order to graduate. These core courses represent 50% of the high school program. In addition, students in the Francais or Immersion program must complete three courses in this area as part of their core program.

## *For Discussion:*

Should all high school students in Manitoba be required to take a common set of subjects? If so, what subjects should be included in the set?

**2.**

Optional courses developed by Manitoba Education, schools or the student are an important part of a student's learning experience. High school graduation requires students to choose up to ten optional courses.

## *For Discussion:*

What proportion of the high school program should be optional? What should be the range of subjects available as options?

**3.**

Every student has unique needs based on physical and intellectual abilities, family and cultural background, and personal interests. Responding to these unique needs poses an important challenge to schools. Educators have given increasing attention to special needs students, including the gifted. The public is also requesting increased attention and more programs be made available to meet the needs of these students.

## *For Discussion:*

What should be the minimum range of programs and services available to Manitoba high school students? To what extent should that minimum range accommodate the needs of all students? What accommodations should be made for students with special needs within this minimum range?

**4.**

A variety of program patterns have been developed to respond to students seeking courses of a more practical nature such as Industrial Arts, Home Economics, Business Education and Vocational Education.

## *For Discussion:*

Should these programs be based on the development of general concepts applicable to a variety of employment areas or should they be based on the development of skills related to a specific job? Should these program patterns relate to others within the high school system? If so, how?

5.

Work education, which includes on-the-job training, work experience and vocational experience, is part of the high school experience for some students.

### *For Discussion:*

Should work education be part of every high school student's education? If so, how and to what extent should it be incorporated.

6.

While most language groups in Manitoba originate outside of the country, Native peoples are indigenous to Canada. The preservation of Native languages and cultures is influenced by government policies and programs.

### *For Discussion:*

What programs and services should high schools provide for the preservation of language and culture of those Native people indigenous to what is now Manitoba?

7.

Over the years, Manitobans have supported the learning of many languages for their practical and intrinsic value. Heritage languages have enjoyed considerable popularity in recent years, especially at elementary and junior high levels. This popularity is in keeping with developments in global communication and demographic composition of Manitoba.

### *For Discussion:*

What role, if any, should high schools play in providing instruction in a variety of languages?

## *The Learning Environment*

High school is one of the primary learning environments for young people and, as such, is responsible for encouraging students to reach curriculum objectives. To accomplish this, high schools must develop and sustain a climate which fosters both intellectual growth and overall personal development. Within this climate, the teacher is the facilitator and must make critical choices in terms of content, level of achievement, appropriate technologies and instructional strategies to complement student's learning styles.

Student growth and development is closely tied to the appropriate combination of environment and instruction.

**1.**

Changes within society have resulted in corresponding changes in how individuals, including teachers and students, relate to each other. In the past, parents and students have had little input into what students learn, how they learn and what they learn. The Charter of Rights and Freedom guarantees individual rights and may affect the way students are treated in a high school setting.

## *For Discussion:*

What standards of behaviour should govern human interaction in school settings?

**2.**

We live in a specialized world, with work generally defined as part of an overall process composed of individual sections requiring sophisticated skills. This is true in both trades and professions. Rapid growth in knowledge have led some teachers to become specialists in certain areas. This trend may cause problems since, in many cases, teaching assignments require a more general education.

## *For Discussion:*

To what extent should the teacher's education match the teaching assignment? Should university education consist of a more generalized preparation for high school teachers?

**3.**

Both public and private sectors are now making extensive use of new technologies – such as VCRs, personal computers, word processors and calculators – to increase their efficiency and effectiveness. Similar technology is already in use in education through the development of computer-related courses, computer-assisted instruction and long-distance instruction. Rapidly changing technology will unquestionably have a serious impact on how we conceive of schools and schooling.

## *For Discussion:*

What accommodations should be made for technology in high schools? To what extent should technology change how programs are delivered to students? How could the "new" technologies be utilized in the restructuring of the learning environment.

## *Program Organization*

How education is organized depends on the purposes of high school education and on how teaching and learning is expected to occur. Programs, program patterns, grades, credits, subjects, courses – all have been used to help organize our thinking about and structuring of high school education.

***1.***

High school education is organized on the basis of university entrance, general, business education, industrial, and occupational entrance patterns which can be viewed as streams which direct students to particular career paths. Each of these patterns is more specifically defined by a set of courses.

### *For Discussion:*

Should high school education be organized according to program patterns leading to specific career paths? If so, on what basis?

***2.***

Knowledge in high schools is organized into a variety of subjects and courses.

### *For Discussion:*

How should knowledge be organized in high schools? To what extent should knowledge be integrated across subjects and courses?

***3.***

High schools were once organized according to grades. To graduate, students were expected to complete a set of courses at each grade level. The grading system has been replaced by the credit system in which students are required to complete at least 20 credits of 110 instructional hours each in order to graduate.

### *For Discussion:*

What is the most appropriate means of organizing and delivering high school education in the province? For example, should a credit system define how the high school curriculum is organized? If so, how would the credit be defined? If not, what would be an alternative?

**4.**

Standards for academic achievements and the measurement of student performance are important issues for both the education profession and the public. Standards represent an ideal against which student performance can be measured. Setting standards, however, is difficult as individuals or groups often differ on the appropriateness of any one method. Measuring student performance also poses problems, not because of a shortage of methods but because of the many interpretations possible from performance results.

## *For Discussion:*

Should common standards of academic achievement be established for all Manitoba high school students? If so, what should these standards be? Who should set the standard – schools, school divisions, Manitoba Education? How should standards be established? What are the most appropriate means of measuring student performance? Who should be responsible for measuring student performance?

**5.**

Manitoba Regulation defines secondary grades as Grades 9 through 12. In practice, however, grade 9 is often referred to as part of the junior high years (grades 7 and 8). Even curricular materials are inconsistent in including or excluding grade 9 from high school organizational practices.

## *For Discussion:*

Should grade 9 be considered part of high school?

**6.**

High schools today are faced with very real problems relating to students who decide to end their schooling, that is, students who leave school after having acquired a certain number of credits and students who are registered but do not attend school regularly.

## *For Discussion:*

What programs and services should be provided to address these problems?

## 7.

Extra-curricular activities have been an important part of a high school student's experience. However, several factors such as busing, timetabling, competition for time and an aging teaching force, have led to restrictions in the number of students involved in these activities.

### *For Discussion:*

Should the school play a role in the provision of extra-curricular activities? Should extra-curricular activities be accessible to all students? What part of the school day should be devoted to these activities? Which of these activities should be essential to the student's high school experience?

## 8.

High school education can be perceived as a threshold experience directly following elementary and junior high experiences and leading to a career choice. Some argue, however, that the linkages between the high school experience and what comes before and after are not all that obvious.

### *For Discussion:*

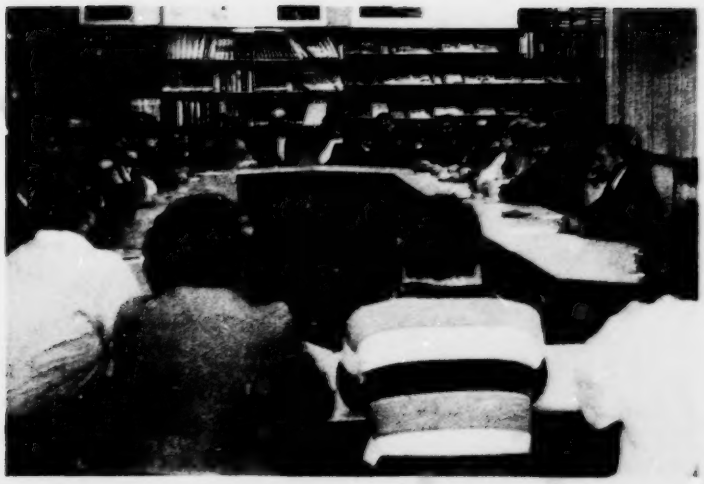
Should high school education be linked more closely to elementary and junior high school? How should that link be expressed or maintained? Likewise, how should high school education be linked to the institutions students choose for further learning?

# An Invitation To Participate

Your participation in the High School Review process is not only welcome, it is essential if Manitoba youth is to be adequately prepared to meet the challenges of a changing society. In this, the first step of the review process, the panel has identified a number of important issues. Now, we invite you to participate through a series of public meetings to be held in communities throughout the province starting the last week of April, 1987.

The High School Review meetings are your opportunity to express your viewpoints concerning high school education in Manitoba, to clarify issues and to become involved in seeking possible solutions and directions relative to the issues identified. Each meeting will be attended by at least six panel members. Each presentation to the panel will be limited to thirty minutes. Written presentations are encouraged but oral presentations will also be allowed. All presentations will be recorded for future study by the panel.

If you would like to schedule a presentation, contact the High School Review Office at 945-4607.



# Public Meetings Schedule

| | |
|---|---|
| Winnipeg | **April 29th** |
| | **April 30th** |
| | **June 3rd** |
| | **June 4th** |
| Dauphin | **May 5th** |
| Selkirk | **May 6th** |
| Thompson | **May 26th** |
| The Pas | **May 27th** |
| Notre Dame de Lourdes | **June 9th** |
| St. Pierre | **June 10th** |
| Steinbach | **June 11th** |
| Carman | **June 16th** |
| Portage | **June 17th** |
| Brandon | **June 18th** |
| | **June 19th** |

For more information on meeting dates and locations, check your local newspaper or call your local School Division office, or the High School Review Office at 945-4607 (toll free in Manitoba 1-800-262-8069 ext. 4607).